

In the old days there was a well founded belief that if horses afflicted with the scratches, an affection of the skin in the fetlock, were watered, and their feet washed in this little stream that they would be cured, and it was the custom to bring horses there from the surrounding Levels community.

In the tourist day that is coming it will be the regular thing to halt the car at this point and the visitors will walk some three hundred yards and climb the declivity that brings them near the top of the cliff and inspect the cave. It will also afford them the boon of the finest drinking water, as cool and clear as is to be obtained in this world of ours.

I have never seen a cave that was so well suited for a habitation as this one. On climbing ^{to} the level of the opening first is found a smooth platform sort of place perhaps thirty by forty feet in size. Next is a great roof or portico which shelters which shelters a large portion of this trace, with an outcurving roof perhaps ten feet high. Then in the wall is a room about six feet wide and ten feet deep, with a low ceiling. A fire across the opening would keep this little retreat comfortable in the coldest weather. Back in this room is an opening of unknown dimensions but extending well back into the cliff. It is very dark there and would not be suitable place for living rooms but would be an ideal place to store food and supplies. The front room is fitted with a level floor, and being open to the outer air is in good condition now without a particle of fixing to afford a comfortable place to sleep and take shelter. No stream issues from this cave, and there is no current of air. It is an ideal place for camping and is one of the sights of the County.

If you have occasion to visit it, follow the path of up by an old abandoned sandstone heap. The place is Dr. H. W. Mc Neels farm, the top of the cliff being the dividing line between his farm and that of F. W. Ruckman land. Perhaps if you go into the cliff you will be on the Ruckman land as well as the McNeel land.

As is the case of every man who has ever cleared and reclaimed land, I am something of a landscape gardener. As you drive through these pleasant valleys, you should ~~will~~ remember that it was the man with the axe whose vision splendid and whole arises.

So I see great possibilities in that little cove which has not been much more than a waste place so far. It has been talked of as a place to grow water cress and there has been some slight effort to transplant wild cranberries into the bog part of the shut in place. On ~~the/other~~ every side is rich farm land but the cove has been unused except for some indifferent pasture, which in a section so solidly blue grass has not been much esteemed. With very little work there could be a little lake formed here of clear pure water. It would be surrounded by beautiful grassy shores and beetling crags would overlook it, there you would have grass, water, and a precipice in close harmony, and it would be one of the beauty spots of West-Virginia. The highway would skirt one side of the park, and Stephen Sewells everlasting house would look down on it, It would be just the right distance, eight miles, to make an attraction for the town of Marlinton, and it would be an objective for drives from Lewisburg, Ronceverte, White Sulphur Springs, and Hot Springs Virginia.

I have been weighing the somewhat slight evidence that has been left of the pioneer Stephen Sewell. He came here with Jacob Marlin in the seventeen-forties both of them long hunters. I am now informed ~~now~~ by competent authority, - Hon. Boyd B. Stutler, the historian, that long hunter is not a synonym of a tall man but was a term to distinguish the professional hunter, who crossed into the forbidden lands beyond the mountains for months stay, as compared with those who took a week or so for the purpose of providing their winter meat.

He owes his fame like Marlin and every other notable to the fact that his name got into print and was preserved that way. Owing to this fact he and Marlin have come to be first English settlers of the Mississippi Valley. Their permanent camp was where the town of Marlinton is located and where they were found by General Andrew Lewis. Marlin survived the French and Indian war, and lived to the end of his life here. He married and had a daughter who married a Drinnep, and he has descendants here now.

Marlin and Sewell had the experience of men who are too closely associated. They quarreled and Sewell left the cabin and took up his abode in a hollow tree. The two places were separated by the crystal waters of Knapps Creek

Both the cabin and tree dwelling were located in the narrow pass through which Knapps Creek breaks through to reach the Greenbrier River. This stream flows between two peaks or headland marking the gate way to the great Knapps Creek Valley one a spur of the Buckley Mountain and the other a spur of Marlin Mountain. These peaks have never been given names, and it is now proposed to name them Mary and Elizabeth, after Elizabeth Dunlap, and Mary Vance Warwick.

The people of this county have specialized on the name of Marlin, and have allowed the people in a distant part of the State to use the name of Sewell. Thus Sewell is remembered by Big and Little Sewell Mountain, Sewell Creek, Sewell Valley, the town of Sewell, and one of the measures of coal of the New River section, known as the Sewell seam.

It is the common belief based upon a tradition, that Stephen Sewell left here, and moved to Sewell Creek which flows into the Gauley River, and that he was there killed by the Indians. As a defender of tradition, I am sorry to say that I have come to the conclusion that Stephen Sewell never lived farther west than the cave at the ^{Run} ~~Run~~ that bears his name in Pocahontas County, near Millpoint.

That he lived on the waters of Gauley is due to a statement prepared by Col. John Stuart, the grand old man of Greenbrier County, in the year of 1798, and it is based on his report that Sewell moved forty miles farther west and lived on a creek that bears his name. It is not at all likely that Sewell lived on Gauley or any point west of the Greenbrier valley prior to 1756. David Tygart had to leave the nearby valley of Tygarts Valley River in 1754, and he is undoubtedly the original settler west of the long intervening valley of the Greenbrier.

At the same time, it is probable that Sewell ranged widely and Sewell Creek could have been named for him. But we have definite history of the time and place of his death. It occurred on the 11th day of September 1756, on Jacksons River, near Fort Dinwiddie. In 1750, Dr. Thomas Walker, an explorer towards Kentucky crossed the Greenbrier River at the mouth of Anthony's Creek and noted that he had word of white settlements higher up on the river.

He referred to people living at or near the mouth of Knapps Creek .
The next year the Lewises were settling whites on the lands surveyed for the
Greenbrier Company . The war clouds began to gather in 1753 . France claimed all the
land drained by the Mississippi . In pursuance of this claim they commenced the
erection of a fort at Pittsburg. Governor Dinwiddie in 1753 sent George Washington
with an ultimatum to the French to abandon their claim to Fort Duquesne, to which the
French gave no heed. In 1754 Washington fought a losing campaign , and reached some
agreement with the French at a place called the Great Meadows or Fort Necessity,
near Brownsville Pennsylvania. Later in that year the Indians killed the Files
family at Beverly, the first settlers to be massacred by the Indians in the French
and Indian War. The next year the settlers on the frontier felt reasonably safe
while Braddock was forming his army but even before his defeat in July, 1755, the
Indians were killing on the Holston River and on the head waters of the New River

The first effect of Braddocks defeat in this section occurred just about a month after
that time when the Indians appeared at the mouth of Knapps Creek and killed twelve
persons and took eight prisoners . This raid ended the hostilities for the year 1755.

But in February and March 1756 they broke out again. This was caused largely by
unfortunate expedition led by Gen Andrew Lewis in the winter of 1755-56
against the Ohio Indians. he marched an army of 418 men clear across the State of West
Virginia to strike the Indians in their towns on the Ohio. It is called the Sandy Creek
Voyage . It resulted in disaster and the men suffered from want of food and from
the cold weather.